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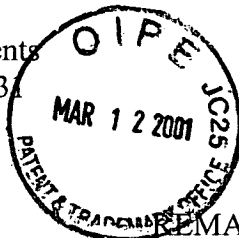
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Ivan Hargro et al. Art Unit : 1723
Serial No. : 09/548,261 Examiner : Therborn, E.
Filed : April 12, 2000
Title : MODULE AND METHOD FOR INTRODUCING A SAMPLE INTO A
CHROMATOGRAPHY COLUMN

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231



RESPONSE

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This paper is responsive to the Office Action mailed on December 7, 2000.

Claims 22-36 are in the case, claims 4-7 and 16-21 having been withdrawn from consideration in response to a restriction requirement. Claims 22, 25, and 28 are independent claims.

The Office Action

In the Office Action mailed on December 7, 2000, the Examiner rejected the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. §102, based on Muller (U.S. Patent No. 4,732,687), and under 35 U.S.C. §103 based on combinations of Muller with either Stahl (U.S. Patent No. 5,338,448), Leavesely (U.S. Patent No. 5,601,708), or Haller (U.S. Patent No. 3,682,315).

The Invention

The Applicants' invention relates to a chromatography column.

In one aspect, the invention relates to a chromatography column having a tubular member with an inlet end. A porous member and a chromatography media are disposed within the

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tubular member. The porous member is spaced from the inlet end, so as to define a receiving region that is sufficiently large to receive a sample module.

The Applicants Request Reconsideration

In telephone conferences with the Examiner on March 1 and March 5, 2001, the undersigned proposed discussing the Application in an interview. Rather than conducting an interview at the current stage of the prosecution, the Examiner suggested that it would be more helpful for the Applicants to submit a request for reconsideration of the pending claims, without amending the Application at this time. In accord with the Examiner's suggestion, the Applicants submit the arguments herein.

Unlike the claimed invention, Muller relates to a chromatography column having at least one media-supporting element (such as a perforated plate) fixed at a location inside the column, so that the media-supporting element is flush with one end of the column, or so that it is a few centimeters from one end of the column, or so that one media-supporting element is fixed flush with one end of the column and another media-supporting element is fixed a few centimeters from the other end of the column. (Muller, col. 2, lines 3-5; col. 3, lines 12-17; col. 4, lines 6-9; Figures 1-3).

Stahl and Leavesley relate to techniques for sealing chromatography columns, but do not address the positioning of the media-supporting elements in Muller.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss any claim amendments that might more clearly describe the invention, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney.

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Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, the Applicants request reconsideration of the pending claims. Please apply any charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 7, 2001

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